Ghassan Kanafani's Theory of Resistance Literature in Occupied Palestine, from the Pages of *Afro-Asian Writings* (1968)

Source reference:
This report was submitted as a document of the Third Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference, Beirut, March 1967, and published in 1968. Data cited are related to the situation prior to the Israeli aggression in June 1967.

Source:
study from palestine
RESISTANCE LITERATURE IN OCCUPIED PALESTINE
By GHASSAN KANAFANY

> When the disaster of Palestine took place in 1948, it did not result only in a radical change in the numerical composition of the Arab community in Occupied Palestine, but also caused a fundamental upheaval in its structure. More than three quarters of the 262,000 Arabs who remained in Palestine after the Zionist occupation were of the rural population. The overwhelming majority of city-dwellers deserted Palestine during or shortly after the 1948 war, a fact which shook to the roots the structure of the Arab community, since the cities were not only the centre of political leadership but – as in most cases – the basic centre of intellectual leadership.

Thus when the Zionist usurpers tightened the grip of military rule ad repressive laws on the Arab masses in the rural areas, particularly Galilee, Negev and the Triangle, the ground was paved for them not only to carry out a wave of serious suppression of any literary or political activity which might arise, but also to sow, in that virgin soil, the seeds of suspect currents which may join in the Zionist political and literary life of the occupied land.

Before Palestine's occupation in 1948, Arabic literature in Palestine constituted an important tributary of the main current that prevailed in the first half of this century, with Cairo as its centre. It was influenced by Egyptian, Lebanese and Syrian writers, who were at that time the revolutionary pioneers of a new stage in Arabic literature, after a long period of stagnation. For a long time, even the prominent Palestinian writers owed their fame to the Arab capitals that welcomed and fostered them. Many factors contributed to deprive Palestine of a literary position corresponding to the political status it enjoyed. Nevertheless, Arabic literature in Palestine flourished and later proved to have been a national vanguard, of the first order.

After 1948, the vanguard of the Palestinian intellectuals in exile played a prominent role and succeeded, despite everything, in a relatively short time to lay the broad bases of an Arabic literature that should more accurately be termed <<the literature of exile>> than <<Palestinian literature>> or <<refugee literature>>. Poetry in particular was the forerunner in this domain.

During the past years of exile, this literature went through a major qualitative development. As is to be expected, silence prevailed immediately in the wake of the catastrophe, as if it were the result of shocked bewilderment. Then it gave way to an outburst of clamourous patriotic poetry, responding as it were to the popular consciousness which, having overcome the shock, fell into disbelief. The literature written in exile was not influenced by popular consciousness alone, but

also by Arab and foreign literary currents that has their swift but deep impact on our literary life. As a result of this dual influence, the literature of exile underwent a qualitative change in form and content. Modern currents imposed their character on the literary techniques, and the phase through which popular consciousness passed, imposed itself on the content.

After the clamorous patriotic poetry of the early fifties, the poets in exile abandoned the traditional form, and their enthusiasm in which they, for a while, sought to deny the reality of the catastrophe, gave room to a unique shade of deep sorrow. The case was fundamentally different with Arabic literature in occupied Palestine itself.

When Palestine fell into the hands of the enemy, there was almost no Arab culture left that could be a nucleus for a new literary revival. A whole generation, or more accurately generations of intellectuals had left Palestine for exile, leaving only a predominantly rural Arab community subject to a cultural, social and political siege seldom known throughout the world.

The term <<cultural siege>> cannot be clearly interpreted unless we probe into its meaning:

1. Due to their social status, the greater part of the Arabs who remained in the occupied land lacked the cultural standard which usually produces a generation of writers and artists.
2. The neighboring cities which welcomed and fostered talented newcomers from rural areas turned into hostile out-of-bounds Jewish towns.
3. A barrier of compulsory cultural boycott was imposed on Arabic literature in its capitals so that the Arabs of the occupied lands were cut off from the modern currents of literature and denied the possibility of inter-action with them.
4. The military rule of the usurpers imposed the kind of literary production they required, which was not of the character sought by the Arabs in the occupied land.
5. Methods of publishing were limited and controlled on the one hand by the ruling authorities, and on the other, but the financing Zionist parties. The conditions laid down by these parties only favoured publications at a variance with the needs and interests of the Arabs in the occupied land.
6. The low standard of foreign languages among the Arabs of the occupied land particularly in rural areas led to an almost total isolation from international literary movement.

These six points briefly explain the meaning of the term <<cultural siege>>, and should be taken into consideration when reviewing Arabic literary production in the occupied land which, despite everything, has been a literature of resistance.

In such conditions of siege poetry is expected to be the first to call for resistance, for it can spread by word of mouth, without being printed.

In addition to classical poetry, popular poetry became a powerful instrument of resistance. Since the twenties, popular poetry has played a very prominent role in Palestine. In fact, it was the Palestinians who carried with them into exile the rhymes and songs which are almost always echoed in any patriotic demonstration in the Arab East. Very few Palestinian would not be acquainted with the rare popular poem left by an anonymous Palestinian militant who was hanged in 1936. The poem spread throughout the countryside as though it were a kind of prayer.

Awaiting his execution in the morning, the militant wrote:

O night, let the prisoner finish his wailing,
For when dawn flutters in its fresh wings.
He will be swinging in the wind.
Friends are parted, and the cups are broken.
O night, stop till all my lamenting is over
Lest you forget who I am

Lest you forget my sighs
O injustice, how were my hours spent at your hands.
Think not that my tears are of fear,
But rather shed for my homeland.
And for a handful of hungry youngsters at home.
Who will feed them after I am gone?
After my two young brothers went to the gallows
How will my wife spend her day?
Mourning for me or for her young ones
Would I had left her bracelet on her arm
When war called me to buy a gun.

After the fall of Palestine in 1948, popular literature remained the outlet through which the oppressed people expressed their anguish. It seems that when weddings in Galilee turned into demonstrations through the words of popular bards and poets, the Zionist occupation forces opened fire on the demonstrators. The Zionist authorities were later forced to submit a large number of <<popular reciters>> to the military governor and to impose strict control on their movements.

Nevertheless words proved to be more effective than fire and capable of breaking the siege. In May 1968, Arab demonstrators clashed with the enemy police, and several people were killed in the fight. Shoulder to shoulder, the demonstrators rushed into the police lines, broke their ranks, and pushed them down the road. With this incident a new song was born and spread out in Galilee.

In Nazareth of Galilee, the police is defeated.
Dayan, pack and go, for the Arab land is liberated
Our brothers in Port Said have made history
If the seventh heaven fell down, we would not leave our land.

Like classical poetry, popular poetry in the Arab land responded remarkably to Arab movements and conditions. This is revealed in the verses following the previous song, after the refrain,

What did the West gain by aggression
But infamy and shame.

When Moshe Dayan, Minister of Agriculture at the time, issued orders to confiscate 5,000 donems of Arab land, in the villages of Negev, Ba'ana, and Deir El Asad in the region called El Shaghour, the following rhyme was sung during the clash and the bloodshed that ensued:

A voice called in Galilee, <<Arab land is for the Arabs>>,
Our Shagour is incomparable, and your dust is dearer than gold
With the unity of our men, the confiscation order was cancelled
Dayan, your order is impossible, and with unity will be annulled.

Popular poetry in the occupied land never ceased to play its part in the resistance, employing all the means that could be mobilized and used as a weapon in times of need. Many Arabs in the occupied land believe that the death of the popular poet known as Hamid who was killed in the mid-fifties while leading a rally in Om El Fahm, was an attempt to halt the multitude of songs, lyrics, and rhymes, which he spread throughout Galilee against the usurper's rule.

If popular poetry is born in the wilderness, in homes, weddings and funerals, and is mostly a mass product that develops with verbal transmission and constitutes a phenomenon that no means of intimidation can halt or trace back to one originator who can be punished or silenced, this is not the case with classical literary production.

We have cited earlier the numerous methods employed by the enemy to counter any attempt to express, through literature, the feelings and demands of the Arabs in the occupied land. Since the

enemy can control the type of Arabic books to be reprinted by private firms in the occupied land, it can naturally impose a certain standard of production as well as a certain content.

The iron siege imposed on Arab culture by the Zionist authorities is not merely limited to a rigid control of Arabic literary production. Quantities of cheap and trivial books were dumped in the markets to mee the Arabs' thirst for reading. Every endeavour was made to hinder the development of a cultured generation of Arabs that would constitute a nucleus for a broader integration with contemporary artistic prospects.

In secondary schools in the occupied land, Arab pupils constitute about 3% of the total number of the Jewish pupils, while Arab boys of secondary school age are no more than 12% of the number of Jewish boys. There are only 100 Arab students in higher institutions, that is less than 1% of the total number of Jewish students instead of 12%.[1] The problem is further aggravated by the fact that Arabic primary schools are forced to follow curriculae lower in standard than those of Jewish schools, which prevents a large number of Arab pupils from continuing their secondary studies. Even in secondary schools, the teaching of foreign languages is below the required standard, which makes many of them incapable of passing the secondary school certificate or continuing their higher education. Official statistics have proved that the majority of Arab students who enter secondary schools leave it to work and not to complete their education. Only 10% of the total number of Arab students pass the secondary school certificate each year. Those of them whose social and economic conditions allow them to join the University, are faced with a series of requirements and conditions that prevent their joining certain faculties. As for the faculties of oriental literary studies, they suffer from a deliberate lack of qualified personnel. After graduation, this small minority is exposed to more political and administrative persecution and incessant attempts to destroy their morale or disregard their qualifications. Un-employment is usually their fate, at the most, employment in fields other than those of the graduate's field of specialization.

This situation has led to the continued destruction of all the cultured generations of Arabs and has prevented them from playing a leading role. On the other hand, the quality of the culture imposed on the Arab market resulted in the deterioration of the cultural standards among the Arabs. There are continued Jewish attempts to draw Arab intellectuals of the occupied land to the Zionist circle. Israeli authorities care little whether the Arab intellectual belongs to the Zionist opposition or Zionist supporters so long as he joins a non-Arab organization. To attain this, they allow papers to appear in Arabic, if they are affiliated to a Zionist establishment, and allow the reprinting of books published in Arab capitals so long as they do not bring up the question of Arab nationalism. To further confuse the issues, they encourage Jews coming from Arab countries to publish their works in Arabic. It is no coincidence that three of the 16 Arabic papers in the occupied land are edited and published by Jews who came to Israel from Arab countries; nor is it by mere chance that the first Arabic novel to be published in Israeli is by the Iraqi Jew, Ibrahim Moussa Ibrahim. Of the 16 papers[2] that appear in Arabic in the occupied land, there is one daily paper owned by the Government, eight weeklies, and seven monthlies, all of which belong to the Zionist-Israeli parties, and express – within the Zionist circle – supporting or opposing views. According to the Israeli authorities, there are twenty eight poets and writers in the occupied land, who write in Arabic, eight of whom are Eastern Jews. The Arabic books published in the occupied land since 1948 do not exceed fifteen collections of poems and about five novels. There is no need to evaluate them here since they were approved by the censor before being put on the market.

[1] Prior to the June 5th aggression of 1967.

In the early years after the establishment of Israel, nothing was published but love poetry which was not welcomed by the public and failed to arouse any response. It was an attempt to draw attention to that particular kind of poetry, and most of the love poems published were trivial and weak in form and content. With the Egyptian revolution of July 1952, came the long-awaited change. Jewish papers under the impression that three years of love poetry had proved something, were surprised by a decisive change of the type of works they began to receive after declaring their willingness to publish any poetic production by Arabs of the occupied land. Hewish papers decided not to publish these nationalist works, and the Arabs organized poetry recital evenings in the villages. These recitals invariably turned into patriotic demonstrations because of the great enthusiasm and large attendance. When most of the Arab poets who attended these recitals were often taken to the military village governors for cross-examination, a strange decision was taken banning such recitals. But this decision could not stop the powerful force which had waited five years to be unleashed.

What happened inside the occupied land was, in fact, the other side of what occurred with the Palestinian poets in exile. Around that time, the poetry of exile had begun to undergo a gradual change – from loud clamorous to enthusiasm sad and yet more hopeful enthusiasm. The phase of "disbelief" had come to a bitter end when reality became too overwhelming to be ignored. The same thing in varying degrees happened with Arab writers in the occupied land. The phase of disbelief which the love poetry failed to alleviate was over; the poets in particular found themselves facing what has come to be termed <<the cause>>. But they chose to face it from an angle other than that of the writers of exile – they chose defiance.

*

We had to wait another ten years before we find in the works of a young man called Mahmoud Darweesh from the village of Birweh in Occupied Palestine, a splendid interpretation of the missing link in that period which witnessed the great transition of Arabic literature in the occupied land: from love poetry to nationalist poetry. In his poems of the mid-sixties, we find that calm, deep mixture of woman and country into one indivisible texture of love.

The literature of exile witnessed similar phenomena at a later period, but the literature of resistance in the occupied land expressed them with deeper and more convincing simplicity, closer to both woman and land.

We will later return to this point in greater detail, but it should be noted here that the love poetry that flowed spontaneously following 1948 was not – as may appear at first glance – a sudden phenomenon cut off from the poetry of resistance. In the chaos of defeat, the Arabic of the occupied land experienced disruption in their personal relations. Most of the Arabs left Palestine, and the few who remained looked upon this as a kind of <<desertion>> which affected their everyday relations far more than those who left. <<The cause,"" with all its magnitude and tragic implications was behind that desertion. It took the Arabs of the occupied land five years to discover that they had lost not only their families and friends but their country as well, and that the feeling of being torn apart seemed more tragic because it basically affected their individual feelings and because they – after all – had not <<left>> their country.

Love-poetry flowed not only to make up for the bitter feeling of loneliness and estrangement, but to establish new relations in that small community that suddenly discovered that it had become a helpless minority in the midst of alien multitudes.

When the impact of defeat and loss of the homeland reached a climax, all these emotions turned into their opposites. Under the new conditions, the helpless Arab minority developed relations of a new type, capable of proving its existence and power – that of challenge and militancy.

Ten years later, Darweesh and other young poets of the occupied land were to succeed in mobilizing these two emotions – which in fact are one and the same – to serve the position of resistance taken up by the literature of the occupied land. Resistance was not an easy choice; it meant a daily fight with a vicious and cunning enemy that considered it in terms of life and death. We have seen how the military rule, with its traditional barbarity, resorted to the policy of suppression; but suppression was not the usurpers' only weapon. They had another more deadly weapon, that of misleading and <<orientation>> on all levels. The take of orientation was a dual task. On the one hand, the state played its part through its paper, publications, educational program, and cultural orientation. Zionist opposition parties, on the other hand, were there to catch – by their enticing attitudes of opposition – whoever escaped the traps laid by the Government.

In 1958, the Mapam opposition party, which is greatly concerned with securing Arab votes in the elections at any price, established a company for publishing Arabic books issued in Arab countries. What helped the party to carry out this policy, was the third of the isolated Arabs for books on the one hand, and their preference of a certain type that does not reflect non-progressive or patriotic tendencies, on the other. In fact, it published some love stories, mostly trivial and written by unknown writers, neither talented nor serious in thought.

The success if these books with the third of Arab readership encouraged the development of this trade. Jewish business-men flooded the Arab market with cheap trivial books, usually termed <<corruptive>> books. Communists, who have large-scale political dealings with the Arabs of the occupied land, printed some old classics and Marxist publications.

Publishing remained limited and controlled by unbearably restrictive conditions, and the political crisis itself was becoming more grave. Some prominent Arab members left the communist group to for the Arab Al Ard (The land) front which was soon to be banned for exceeding the Zionist-set limits.

In 1959, Al Ard Organization began to publish a bulletin, capitalizing on an Israeli law that allowed any citizen to issue one bulletin a year without the permission of the Publications Department. In 1959, the organization issued 13 bulletins that appeared under various names: -- <<The Land>>, <<The Cry of the Land>>, <<The Blood of the Land>>, <<The Spirit of the Land>>, etc. These bulletins were printed in a small printing shop in Acre owned by Selim El Zeibak. The last issue was on Port Said Victory Day, and President Nassar's picture appeared on the front page, with the full text of the address he delivered on that occasion filling the rest of the pages. It seems that this issue irritated the responsible authorities beyond endurance since they never though that Al Ard would, through a legal loophole carry out its goal. They arrested the persons responsible for the bulletin and issued orders banishing the leaders of the organization. In this bulletin, which appeared 13 times and whose worn-out issues were handled by Arab hands with unequalled reverence, Arab poetry of the resistance made its appearance two or three times.

In 1960, another attempt was made by the Arab writers. They availed themselves of the opportunity of having among them the Palestinian born Jewish writer Benjamin Tamuz, who posed a friend of the Arabs and concluded with him a verbal agreement. According to this agreement he would allow them to use his house as a meeting place where they would read poetry and invite whoever could attend. Since he posed as a friend of the Arabs, he would for his part, undertake the task of publishing the poetry in whatever publication he deemed fit.

The first experience was an unhappy one. Benjamin Tammuz was impressed by a poem recited by an Arab poet, describing the destruction of his village at the hands of the Zionists in 1948. He translated it into Hebrew and published it, but the Arab poet was immediately tried for "hostile

actions against the state." The poet was dismissed from his pedagogic job and when no Jewish writer defended him, the verbal agreement fell dead.
A year later, the Arab writers in the occupied land made another attempt. They urged the Jewish novelist Aharun Maguid to propose to the Israeli Writers' Association the admission and protection of Arab Writers. But the proposal was rejected by a majority and only two out of the seventy members approved it.
All these attempts convinced Arab writers and poets of the futility of this method, and it became imperative for each writer to indicate his affiliations clearly and openly. It seems that during this period when Arab writers had to make their choice, the Arabs working in politics had also to make theirs. The Israel Communist Party split into two parties – Arab and Jewish. The Arab party, responsible for the <<Ittihad>> newspaper, had the opportunity of exercising complete control over the paper and bravely opening the door to Arab writers who began to resort to symbolism. On the page of this paper, Samih AlKassem, a poet from El Ramah, published fragments of a symbolic poem of artistic merit, called <<Aram>>. It consisted of four songs though not of an intricate symbolism on the Arabs in the occupied land. A writer, Tewfik Fayyad published a symbolic play called <<The Madhouse>>, and a story called <<The Disfigured>>. Mahmoud Darweesh published parts from his poem <<A Lover from Palestine>>.
The real stage for the literature of resistance continued to be the village squares, festivals, and its wide circulation continued to be by verbal transmission.
From the few available sources, the critic can make two basic observations:

1) In contrast to the poetry of exile, poetry in the occupied land is not characterized by a note of lamentation, or despair, but reflects an admirable hope and a constant revolutionary fervour.
2) Arab poetry in the occupied land is immediately influenced by Arab political events, and considers these events as one of its integral themes it is committed to deal with.

During the tripartite aggression on Egypt, and before the smoke of battle had cleared away, Habib Kahwagi, a villager from Fessouta whose name later stood out as one of the four leaders of <<Al Ard>> (now exiled in Tiberias) delivered a poem at a mass rally in Haifa.

Flow from my heart, oh verse, with a brave rhythm that mocks all bonds,
Send a resounding echoing message to the land of the canal and to Port Said,
To the heroes who flew like Providence to repel the invaders,
Do you threaten with destruction Nasser of Egypt and seek a clamorous victory,
Our land is a hell for the invader, and heaven for every loving brother!

Then he goes on to say:

<<I stayed by my radio, and my soul was wit you despite all barriers
My soul is aflame and my mind is all in fusion as I follow the battles from afar.>>

During the same period, the Arabs of the occupied land echoed the words of the poet of Nazareth, Hanna Abou Hanna:

<<Proud steadfast city of Port Said,
Our sweet dreams hovered on your port,
On the shores of your rocky bay,
All intruding armies perish,
Men answered the call of glory.
What free man accepts a life of humiliation?>>

Mahmoud Darweesh wrote a collection of poems entitled <<Birds without wings>> about the African Liberation struggle, in which his intent cannot be mistaken by the reader.

Arabs of the occupied land are wont to reiterate a poem by Darweesh entitled <<Laila of Gaza>>, in which he describes the fate of an Arab girl from Gaza after the Jews entered the sector during the tripartite aggression. In this poem, the edge of a mordant blade of pain immediately flashes to the eye. The poet, whose village had been destroyed and who lived in bondage, laments the girl, pays tribute to her and encourages her people to resist.

When his village was destroyed, he made the people of Galilee sing with him:

<<In your dust, my country, I feel the warmth and tremour of youth,
In the fig orchards, the golden prairies I live.
My roots are deep in your soil
How can they be torn out by alien hands?>>

At the end of the poem, he says:

<<I came not, friends, to mourn my loved ones;
My wounds bear the wrath of a million
In the land of exile.>>

It is the same poet who says:

<<Should I go hungry and the usurper satiated,
Who of my remaining bones made their banquets
Dust of my country I rebel for you,
Returning brother I rebel for you.
To keep the river turbulent and overflowing
I called for tributaries for its mouth.>>

We are soon to witness a rapid development in Darweesh's verse – a remarkable development in content and poetic ability as well as form. Together with the poet Samih Al Kassem, he gradually leads the movement for abandoning the traditional verse form without losing its ardour and catching up with the modern style.

Arab poets of the occupied land have sung the events and the issues in the Arab countries and responded quicker than many Arab poets to the battles and clashes which the Arab arena has raged with in recent years. Moreover, their poems treat these events from a more hopeful and determined point of view. We have seen the painful paradox of Darweesh's poem <<A Girl from Gaza>>, where he encourages her as if her were free, and instills hope in her people's hearts as if he were on the other side of the front. This same spirit prevails throughout the years – in the poetry of resistance inside the occupied land. In another poem, Darweesh says:

<<You are like a palm tree in my mind,
That has never been broken by storm or man
Nor were her locks ever raped
By Best of wilderness or forest
But it is I who is banished behind door and wall!>>

This feeling soon developed further in another poem where he addresses the Palestinian <<maid>> outside the occupied land:

<<We cross the road,
Chained
Like prisoners,
My hand, or yours, I know not
Sensed the pain
From the other.>>

After the skillful hint, he goes on to a more intimate stage:

<<Perhaps you have forgotten me,
Like a tun in the wind,
Westward setting:
Yet if I try to forget you
A star settles down on my hand.>>
It is in his relation with the <<outside>> world that his destiny lies. Samih Al Kassem expresses the same relation to another poem.
<<No morning passes my window
Without visions of wounds on the beloved horizon,
A wound in a dark iron chest,
And wounds in the heart of dark Taiz,
Water the lily of freedom that grows,
At the foot of the red mountain,
And flows like spring in the thirst desert
My Arab desert.>>
It is the same emphasis <<my>> Arab desert that makes the poet consider the whole question from a position of more hope and determination.
<<The caves of black tea, coffee and kaat
Have become barracks;
And my men from Assyut and Port Said,
Are countless,
And Victory is sure.>>
Does he speak of <<his cause>> or <<The Yemeni Cause>>? In his undoubtedly clear vision, simple, true and frank, he adopts the same attitude as Darweesh, when he identifies his love for his country and his love for a woman.
The relation between the literature of the resistance and the Arab battled fought outside the occupied land is that of natural fusion. We have seen how simply the popular poet expressed this. The poet Mahmoud Dessouki, from the town of Al Teira in the Triangle, probes into this world closely intertwined relations through minute details that give it an appearance of simplicity. This particular poet is, perhaps the poet of the occupied land most responsive to events in the Arab world. For seven years he sang epics of the Algerian Revolution, and has written poems on Raga' Abu Amashi, Nadia El Salti and Jamila Bouhreid.
Arab poets of the occupied land were naturally always more responsive to the daily problems facing them, namely, the persistent Israeli attempt to usurp and crush the Arab personality.
There is a poem written by a young man from El Ledh about the well-known Israeli irrigation scheme that led to the destruction of several Arab villages. Unfortunately no Arabic text is available, and the following is a translation of the poem. After describing the atmposhere of the Arab village, the poet sadly states:
And then the feat was dead
The song disappeared;
There will not be another feast
Next year.
Children will not play games,
And birds will be silent;
The baker will not sell his cakes,
And the old man won't get a new dress

For his pretty daughter.
Another song haunts the village:
A sad yellow song;
Tears flow from silent eyes
Fields turned into a chameleon
That changed its green color to brown,
To grey

The dawn in black;
The sun, a black stone suspended in the sky:
Fields are crushed by the teeth of ferocious tools.
Children weep feebly;
Villagers stand helpless,
And they, too, weep.
When fortitude reaches beyond the limits of bravery, it can resort only to sarcasm. When tyranny is alert and watchful, and the oppressed people are brave, they will as a last resort, find sarcasm the best way to face in earnest the whole situation, considering it as temporary: a tragedy today and a comedy tomorrow. When an Arab from the occupied land, for instance, watches the municipal council of his village holding futile meetings all through seventeen years for formality's sake, what can his reaction be? Nayef Saleh Selim from Galilee gives the answer:
<<A council in my home town, functions by good will,
Leaving matters to Almighty God:
Its members, for love of glory and freedom,
Forget it for little household chores.
Some of them are satisfied with the title of member,
And some, in their silence, are symbolic figures,
I have seen some of its afternoon sessions,
With everyone silent, letting nature take its course,
If they speak, their words are dead,
Mere words on lifeless lips –
They always shout when meeting in camera.
Their laws and rulings are like religious sayings.
Everything in my village is built on relativity;
Its houses, its waters, like its rocky land,
Are tended and managed with bowed shoulders.
Its goods are the fruit of our weary backs,
While we live in misery and financial hardship.
But we will not remain so to be sold wholesale,
For ours is the age of the spaceship.
With the same sarcastic tone, the people of El Bakala sin a poem by an anonymous poet, paradying Antara's poem which says <<In the toughest war I am not unknown>>. Gabr Maidi, known for his cooperation with the occupation forces, had visited the village of El Bakala. Everyone refused to receive or even greet him; when he left the village, an unknown poet parodied Antara's poem, speaking for the agent.
In my future, I'll become a symbol of degradation,
My bad deeds cause those who see me to flee.

I've gown my moustache till it reached my eyes and ears,
And trimmed my dress in handsome style,
But God changed my fortune in seconds,
My luck has gone, and thrown me off my horse.

This biting sarcasm is in fact astonishing for it undoubtedly emanates from a deep realization of the transience of events and of the fact that a change will occur one day and then the nightmare will be a thing of the past. It springs from a fortitude sunk deep in the conscience of the people, and it is certain and true because it sprang from the countryside, from the earth, and not from the cities and the towns. Thus events took a crucial turn. Where the aggressor expected to bring about ignorance, backwardness, and integration, he was surprised to meet in the countryside real, deeply-rooted fortitude that transcended the surface of events – a fortitude based on the close link between the soil and the homeland. The peasant by virtue of his historical nature throughout history cannot accept aggression; thus he considers the whole matter a fleeting tragic comedy.

There is a short story that clearly illustrates this statement. It was recently published in the Arab Communist paper not as a story, but as a piece of news, but the touch of an artist moulded it into a genuine short story. It soon became a treasured work in the literature of resistance inside the occupied land.

<<Abou Hamed did not care much when the survey office registered the plot of land, stating that it was a matter of <<dispute>> between the state and Ibrahim El Hamid. He merely said, <<Register, register! Nothing is cheaper than ink and paper – and I am not giving up my land!>> He went on tilling and cultivating the land as he had done for over 50 years, since he was a youth helping his father, and as he had done ever since his father's death. Days went by; about a year or more passed. Abou Hamed had almost forgotten what the survey officer had recorded when he was summoned to the Haifa Court to attend the case of his <<disputed>> land. On the scheduled day, Abou Hamed went to Haifa accompanied by his son who left his work to go with his aged father. A loud voice called his name, and Abou Hamed left the waiting room with his son and entered the court room, and the trial began. The judge asked him <<Can you prove your ownership of the piece of land No. 48, Block 19670 of Magdel Kurum area?>>

Abou Hamed replied, <<Yes, your Honour. I inherited it from my late father. God rest his and your father's soul.>>

The Judge said, <<Stop this nonsense! Leave your father out of it. Have you got papers to prove it?>>

About Hamed reflected a little and said, <<I am telling you, Sir, that I inherited it from my father and tended it with him since I was a boy of 15>>.

<<This is no proof>>, the Judge said. <<Well, this land is 60% rocks, and therefore state property>>.

Abou Hamed cried, <<What 60 or 10% -- the tractor ploughs it all, your honour. There may be a rock here or a rock there, but from each one grows a fig tree or a vine. It isn't barren land. My father spent his life clearing stones from it and so did I. Can't the state find another plot of land to covet?>>

At this the judge said, <<Once more I tell you to stop this nonsense! The state does not encroach on anyone's property. It is its right.>>

<<Its right?>> Abou Hamed questioned. <<I know that the state is rich, your honour, and I am a man who owns only his flesh and bones, so how can the state stand against me?>>

The judge said, <<Listen, man. You are in Court, so stop this nonsense talk. Then after a little thinking, he said, <<Well, what do you say to the state taking half the land and you the other?>>

Abou Hamed shook his head, saying, <<My father, sir, never told me that I had a brother called the state with whom I should share the land>>.
Exasperated, the judge impatiently said, <<Old man, I think you'd better accept my arbitration. What do you say to that?>>
At which Abou Hamed retorted, <<By God, your honour, I find your judgement like a dry pod – black and crooked>>, and he took his cane and went out mumbling: <<An unjust sentence is short-lived>>.
If we resort to the cold objectivity of a critic, we may find many technical defects in the story, but no one can by-pass and forget it. With its sharp brevity and piercing popular satire, it provides a very impressive, perfect sketch which could rarely be given in such a limited space. What reader would concern himself with cold, artistic standards at a time when the story as such takes part in the battle?
With the wisdom derived from being closely tied to the land, and from the reality he described as <<spending lifetimes>> on the land, Abou Hamed summed up the real problem as seen by Arabs of the occupied land: <<A black cooked dry pod>>. Is there a better means of attaching the regime than the biting popular satire?
This sarcasm is reflected in the political leaflets. Reading these leaflets could be a great pleasure – for they are highly satirical treatment, that borest through the bones, full of popular images which, as said in the villages, were never impressed by the usurpers.
The anecdote of Abou Hamed is an early indication of the phenomenon which made its appearance in the poet, Mahmoud Darweesh. This deep, simple axiomatic fusion between <<man and land>> as expressed by Abou Hamed marks an advanced development in the literature of resistance in the occupied land.
In the first half of 1966, Mahmoud Darweesh was thrown in prison. It seems that during his long stay there, he gave final shape to that deep-rooted logical fusion between man and land – individual relations and the individual's relation with his country.
It was in prison, it seems, that Darweesh wrote his collection of poems entitled <<A Lover from Palestine>>. One main line runs through all the poems – not merely an emotional escalation of his relation with the homeland, but a complete integration of the values which poets had considered to be more or less equally divided between man's relation with a woman and his relation with his country. In <<A Lover from Palestine>> the sweetheart is so transparent that she loses her earthly features. Her beauty itself is summed up in two enchanting words <<A Palestinian Maid>> -- more than adequate:

….. And I swear:
To weave a kerchief of my lashes,
And scribe on it poems for your eyes
And a name I shall water with a heart melted in songs
Until it stretches into shady trees;
I shall write a phrase more sweet than martyrs, than kisses
<<Palestinian she was, and still is>>!
Not only this, but she is the saviour, the redeemer and all
Glory to you….
Your echo – in my imagination –
Endowed jail and chain with wings;
I see you, a young mare, galloping,
If I rest against a pillow,

I feel you on cold nights
A sun
That chants in my blood.
I call you childhood
And there it stands before me.
I call you Spring
And soon roses and herbs bloom proudly,
I call you the sky
And the rain laughs and the thunder bellows…
Glory to you!

Darweeh's <<A Lover from Palestine>> is a reinterpretation of the early works of young Palestinian poets, who concentrated their efforts on love-poetry immediately after 1948. Such technical and artistic maturity as revealed in Darweesh's work was possible only after the tragedy had reached its climax, engulfed everything, and struck its roots deeper; it became totally integrated with life in its daily, successive, subjective and general aspects.

With the imminence of clash, the voice of the people would immediately turn to barricades in the process of direct confrontation.

We have seen how this voice rang out in patriotic poetry when during the tripartite aggression the long-awaited historic chance appeared on the horizon. Just as the tripartite aggression kindled, throughout the Arab homeland, hopes of final confrontation and settling of accounts, it kindled the same hope in the occupied land.

We also have seen how the popular voice resorted to irony as it awaited the historic moment of confrontation.

On the ninth anniversary of the Kafr Kassem massacre, a delegation of young men headed for that village which became a symbol of resistance in occupied Palestine. But the delegation that went to express condolences and encouragement was surprised to find the village surrounded by enemy forces, for the authorities feared that the commemoration would, like every year, turn into a demonstration. The youths who were prevented from entering the village gathered behind the barbed wire – a mass of men and cars. The barbed wire enclosure turned into a festival area, and the poet Samih al Kassem sang a poem which everyone in Galilee now knows by heart:

Despite the darkness of oppression and hardship,
The emissaries of struggle came to Kafr Kassem
Despite those venomous atrocities,
Despite the wires planted everywhere,
Despite the oppressors' guns.
We have come – so let the rulers lick their shame.
Graves of our loved ones, a thousand greetings,
Living but unrecognized graves
What condolences have we to express?
We who are your twin mourners.
We came to call, Kafr Kassem to rise
O Kafr Kassem, answer our call!

When the chances of battle unfolds, poetry moves to lead the revolutionary march. In its daily reaction to the enemy's presence, it resorts as we have seen to sarcasm. In dealing with economic and social problems inside the occupied land, its voice is clear – not one of tears and complaints but one of challenge and defiance. The economic, social, and political persecution, seldom

paralleled in brutality under any racial system in the world, is a prelude to the defiance in the Arab literature of resistance in the occupied land.

We have seen how Abou Hamed, feeling that the state of usurpers was about to swallow the few acres of land on which he and his father had spent their lives, simply stated – without tears or complaint – that <<an unjust sentence is short-lived>>. He made a platform from the nightmare of oppression designed to crush his energy, to declare from it his simple deep defiance. The same thing was done by Tewfik Ziad, a young man from Nazareth, after the series of political and economic persecutions of Arabs in the occupied land. In 1965, he declared that: --

It is a thousand times easier
To pass an elephant through the eye of a needle,
To catch fried fish in your nets,
To plough and till the sea
To make the crocodile talk –
It is a thousand times easier
Than stifling the spark of a thought,
And shifting us by even a hair,
From the path we have chosen.
We shall weigh on your chests like stone –
Go hungry,
Go naked,
Defiant,
Singing our poems,
Filling the angry streets with demonstrations,
Filling the prisons with pride,
Raising generation after generation
Of watchful children –
As if we were the force of the impossible
In Led, Ramleh and Galilee.

Samih al Kassem expresses the same thought in his poem <<Message from the Unemployment Market>>. Like the previous poem, it portrays the bitter reality of the Arabs in the occupied land with the enemy exerting the impossible to transform them into a class of servants for the Jews – as it was once by an Israeli senator. This popular resistance in the occupied land has always proved that in crucial moments it immediately rises to the level of brave confrontation. It never relinquishes its role, however the means may vary, and considers the miserable reality only an outlet for change, not complaint.

Al Kassem has written a poem entitled, <<Card to the Masses>>, in which he address the people:

<<Answer the bitter enemy, for the time has finally come,
Answer the acolytes of throne built of shackles and bonds –
Daughter of defiant fathers,
Answer the bitter enemy, for the time has finally come.

When enumerating the characteristics of Arab poetry of resistance in the occupied land, we can safely add that it has a leftist tendency. And this is not by mere chance; it is another result of the conditions in which the Arabs of the occupied land live under the bondage of Zionist rule. These conditions can be summed up in three main points:

1) The overwhelming majority of Arabs of the occupied land are of rural origin. That is, most of them are peasants – the class that not only for the brunt of the successive upsurges in Palestine before the occupation, but of bearing the major burden of the 1948 War.
2) These peasants are daily subjected to atrocious repressive measures by the usurpers who relentlessly seek to deny them their very means of their livelihood. This is very clearly expressed in most of the poems, stories, and articles by the Arabs of the occupied land, from Tewfik Ziad's poem <<The Impossible>>, and Samih Al Kassem's <<Message from the Un-employment Market>>, to the poems of Mahmoud Darweesh.
3) The regime of the usurpers was simply the result of conspiracies by capitalist regimes that created it and has constantly supported it, a fact which reflects itself on the liberty and everyday life of the Arabs.

These conditions led not only to the creation of a leftist literature, but to the deepening of resistance and raising it from the level of blind raging passion to a firm-rooted conscious attitude.

Those who do not know the truth of the Zionist <<view>> inside the occupied land, with its details, often fail to realize the sharp, deep perspectives of the Arab literature of resistance. The answers given by the literature of resistance to the Zionist claims which weigh heavily on the Arabs of the occupied land, have two basic elements that make it highly conscious without sinking into details or irrelevancies. These two elements are the depth and conciseness of the conscious attitude.

Mahmoud Darweesh gives a wonderful example when he retorts to an Israeli claim that the new Jewish generations born on occupied Palestinian soil would have deeper roots and closer ties, and hence would be more tenacious than the rootless generation of newcomers:

<<I can recognize the Romans' horses
Though the fields may change.
But I know first that
I am the pride of men
And the knight of knights.>>

He then states the whole problem simply, proudly and with decisive finality,

<<Ant eggs do not eagles hatch.
And serpents' egg,
Hides only a snake!>>

Tewfik Ziad is more direct in his confrontation when he says,

<<We shall weigh like stone on your chests –
Go hungry, go naked, defiant,
Singing our poems,
Filling the angry streets with demonstrations,
Filling the prisons with pride,
Raising generation after generation
Of wrathful children>>.

In the literature of the resistance, the reader meets such replies to the various Israeli claims. But these claims are dealt with in such a quick, decisive manner on the assumption that they were obvious and repetitive, that they may not attract the attention of readers unfamiliar with the case. But the reader concerned with the problem finds them vital and valuable issues contributing to the conscious resistance which refuses to be drawn into an argument based on an equal footing.

This phenomenon brings us to another important aspect of the subject. How does Zionist literature, for its part, view the Arabs? What is the truth of the existing <<relationship>>? How does the Arab see himself in Zionist literature and how is he seen in it?

The significance of this questions leis in the fact that it exposes the two faces of the problem: that of the racist Zionist occupation which regards the Arabs of the occupied land as an inferior human species, and the conscious, radiant face of Arab resistance as portrayed in Arab literature in the occupied territory.

This direct clash which constitutes an inevitable everyday problem in the occupied land is reflected not only in the Arab literature of resistance, but in our own understanding of this literature through its objective conditions. From this daily clash we can conjure up a clearer picture of the tasks of resistance literature in the face of Zionist literature which constitutes one of the daily dangerous stresses applied by the occupation forces and at the same time we can deduce the merit and truth of Zionist literature in its treatment of the <<Arab hero>>.

Arab literature of resistance in the occupied homelands offers an advanced model and a new landmark seldom paralleled in other corresponding literatures in modern times. Considering its difficult and highly complicated tasks, it can be compared only with conditions suffered by the black citizens under the racist regime of South Africa, and even surpasses them in brutality and barbarity.

The literature of resistance in the occupied land can thus be classified into three levels that go hand in hand with life.

When the enemy tries to draw the Arabs into any kind of dialogue, it is faced with biting sarcasm which reveals that in Arab eyes, the enemy is only a transient thing. The Arabs face all enemy attempts to crush the Arab personality with this piercing sarcasm which reveals the real depth of the situation.

When the Arab reacts to his own unfortunate situation, on the racial, political and economic levels, he is frustrating the enemy's chance of making this situation a nightmare draining every Arab vitality. He consequently builds out of the wreckage of his life a forum of tempestuous defiance.

When confrontation explodes and the moment of clash approached, the literature of resistance turns from challenge and defiance to decisive attach. This fact becomes quite evident in any quick review of Arab literary works in the occupied land.

But in all cases, this literature remains above desperate tears, laments and complaints. It is always in a position of offensive, that would herald the day of victory. Above all, it will always be a link in the chain of the permanent Arab revolution. It has kept pace with the Arab progressive movement across all barriers of repression and intimidation. It has considered itself an inevitable part of the revolution and has deeply and creatively reacted to its brighter aspects. This naturally demanded much greater effort than is necessary in the Arab cultural movement outside the occupied land. The literature of resistance did without hesitation match these difficult demands, ably fulfilled all requirements, and on the other hand, answered the claims and allegations of the Zionist cultural movement regarding <<the Arab type.>> This, it has achieved not only by presenting the true Arab type, but also by bringing forth the militant and committed Arab writer, struggling against all atrocities and oppression. It offered the example of the <<fighting writer>> which had for a long time disappeared from our cultural life, and of the literature of the scythe which is whetted to cut down all dark crooked pods. The literature of resistance in occupied Palestine has closely linked the social and political questions, considering them two aspects of a formula that should be essentially integrated in order to undertake the task of resistance. It went even further when it realized, at an early stage the organic link between the issue of resisting Israeli occupation and the liberation causes in Arab countries and throughout the world. On all these fronts with all their intricate implications, the literature of resistance in occupied Palestine has shouldered and fulfilled its commitments.

The overwhelming majority of resistance writers in occupied Palestine have gone beyond the limits of artists activity in their commitments. They are actually involved in the national movement in one way or another, struggling within the framework of the nationalist organizations and suffering the consequences of the Israeli repressive policy. It has become known, for instance, that the poet Mahmoud Darweesh was imprisoned several times, that the poet Samih Al Kassem had – in turn – know the bitter edge of martial law, and that the poet Habib Kahwagi – one of the founders of <<Al Ard>> (The Land) movement – is exiled. The Israeli government exerted continuous pressure on a national company to expel Fawzi El Asmar, on account of his poems as well as his political activities. The poet Tewfik Ziad and Tewfik Fayyad and others were expelled from their jobs.

This policy of repression did not lead to any negative result. In fact, a poet like Mahmoud Darweesh renewed his vision and imagery, and developed his style in an astounding degree during his imprisonment. The same is true of Samih Al Kassem. The Israeli policy of repression, which aimed at disintegration of and dissension in the Arab community of the occupied land, led to an increasing recognition of the social aspect of the resistance movement.

We can say that conscious commitment to the national cause is the main factor that led to the literature of resistance in occupied Palestine towards the realization of its responsibilities without losing any of its dimensions. Numerous though they were, these dimensions revolved in the orbit of fighting against the Israeli occupation.

The issue of commitment is not an abstract theory; nor is the issue of liberation. The clear vision, among resistance writers in occupied Palestine, of the aspects, principles, and means involved in both issues leaves no grounds for ambiguity, vagueness or compromise. It is this very fact that made the resistance literature we witnessed in occupied Palestine during the last decade, a literature free of lamentation; a literature that neither surrenders and despairs nor argues with itself and suffers nervous convulsions resulting from any misconstruance of the real situation. Its vision was not an emotional improvisation, but a deeply conscious and responsible realization of the aspects of the battle in which it found itself involved. Thus it avoided the phenomenon of romantic and subjective relapses suffered by most of the Arab poetry of this period. We note that this phenomenon tends to become more acute and take the form of lamentation, hysterics and shirking of responsibility when the poet himself is too detached to realize and fully conceive his commitments and obligations.

On the international level, the poetry of resistance realizes its commitment to the revolutionary movement in the world, which is ultimately the climate in which the local revolutionary movement develops and grows, affecting it and being affected by it.

Commitment to the international dimensions of the battle was always one of the characteristics of poetry and resistance. But this did not lead to laxity in its commitment to their own direct form of struggle. On the contrary, it enriched it, conferred on it significance, gave it depth, and provided it with a stimulus.

*

Commitment to the world revolution derives its value from its contribution to enhancing commitment to the local revolution, and not from its being a romantic formulae that tends to shirk its direct responsibility.

The Arab literature of resistance has expressed this occupation clearly, directly and decisively. It thereby gave the human dimension its due place – a dimension which constitutes its responsibility and a stimulus at the same time.

*

On the other hand, the nature of the Palestinian problem makes it the focus of Arab reactions. Therefore, the poetry of resistance in occupied Palestine may be correctly described as <<the mouthpiece and historical record of these reactions.>>

Throughout the stage extending from the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 to 1960, most of the poetry of the occupied land was classical in form, rhetorical in content, thus corresponding to the social, political and cultural radical change that swept the Arab region. At the same time, this corresponded to a primary stage of its development. It is actually surprising that such poets as Mahmoud Darweesh and Samih Al Kassem wrote in this rhetorical vein at that period, yet were able, later to effect a tremendous development in form and content alike. During this particular period, numerous Arab poets sang of the Algerian Revolution. In addition to the poets already mentioned, there are long poems by Rashed Hussein, Abi Ayyas, Mahmoud Dessouki, Gamal Kawar, Hanna Abou Hanna, Ibn El Rama, Essam Abbas, Fawzi El Asmar and others.

But the artistic formulation that took the rhetorical vein prevalent during this period, was not at the expense of the content. Through practice, the poets of resistance were able to evolve the modern contemporary form. And within this framework the development of form and content was effected in a harmonious unconflicting manner, with neither aspect overshadowing the other. The roots of commitment and hostility to the usurpers continued to be the crucial binding force in this development.

*

The literature of resistance in occupied Palestine is thus linked to a social aspect, pledging allegiance to the toiling class on whose shoulders hang the guns of fate and resistance.

The literature of resistance preserves this progressive social bond in another of its dimensions – the commitment to liberation revolutions throughout the world.

Then comes its firm organic connection with its Arab dimension, with a deep realization of its meaning, necessity and genuineness without losing the clarity of its social insight.

These three links or bonds are observed within a framework of commitment to the integrity of the word, of unshakable belief in their role and value, and of adherence to their responsibility as a basic weapon in the resistance movement which encompasses a much broader meaning than mere armed resistance.

Within a framework of responsible artistic and technical commitment, these three bonds revolve around one main axis, -- brave confrontation in the direct cruel and costly battle waged daily against the occupying enemy who weighs heavily on Arab existence in occupied Palestine.

The poetry – and literature in general – of resistance was optimistic from the start. This optimism was neither unjustified nor a rash illusion; otherwise it would have faded during twenty years of suffering and captivity. It was a healthy, sound and vigorous offspring of a deep realization of the aspects of the battle; it was a genuine reflection of the masses and the real issue at stake – both the aim and the instrument of resistance.

The poetry of resistance sprang up from the land of commitment and commitment to the land, revealing through practice and confrontation its depths and dimensions. Despite all unbelievable difficulties, it emerged proud and ardent in both form and content, which definitely places it at the head of the current Arab cultural movement.

Thus the literature of resistance, close to its origins, recognizing its scopes, and being committed to its obligations has not known renunciation, reproach, or lamentation. It undertook its role and responsibilities, not hiding behind <<a veil of boredom>>, cheap verbosity, or moods vulnerable to the slightest wind. It was not a mere luxury, but has always been a <<commitment>> at one and the same time to arms, beauty and ideals. It is this alone that makes a poet such as Mahmoud

Darweesh – almost the only one in our vast Arab continent – receive the June 5th disaster with firmness and fortitude, funding in it a stimulus:

My Country,
The iron of my chains
Teaches me the eagle's ferocity
And the gentleness of the optimist.
I knew not that under our skins
Lay the birth of a storm
And the matrimony of brooks

They shut me away from light, in a cell.
And radiant torches glowed
Like a sun in my heart.
They wrote my card number on the wall
And the wall danced with gay
Growing ears of corn.
I gnawed your picture in the blood-stained wall.
And wrote the song of the fleeting darkness,
And my fingers in the locks of light.
The conquerors of my roofs
Have conquered but promises of thunder.
They will only see the glow of my brow
And will only hear the creaking of my chains
If I perish on the cross of my worship
I'll be a saint in fighter's dress.

Blurb:

Appearing in English for the first time in the spring of 1968 in *Afro-Asian Writings*, Ghassan Kanafani's theory of resistance literature found itself at the intersection of Cold War currents converging on Palestine. A prolific editor, novelist, playwright, poet, painter, and social theorist, and refugee of the 1948 nakba, Kanafani became the spokesperson for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in its formation in the wake of the 1967 war. His work on resistance literature in the context of Palestine began years earlier, however, with traces evident in his editing and essays of *Filastin* in the mid-sixties, and in his participation in the Chinese funded Afro-Asian Writers Bureau, the Soviet, Egyptian and Indian funded Afro-Asian Writers Association, and in the Arab Nationalist Movement. From 1964, Kanafani was influenced by Maoist thought, adapted to the Palestinian context, and in his memoirs and fiction one finds the mark of encounters with a wide range of writers, including Arthur Koestler, William Faulkner, Maxim Gorky, and George Orwell, as well as the Cuban Tricontinental. A proponent of the power of the written word as a mode of resistance to colonial occupation, Kanafani promoted through his editing and public speaking the importance of feminist, anti-racist perspectives. This essay took other forms, comprising parts of two books by Kanafani on resistance literature, public talks at conferences and cultural hubs in Beirut, in essays in the pages of the Arabic press, and simultaneously in Arabic original and English and French translation in this version in *Afro-Asian Writings*, published by the Afro-Asian Writers Association and later to be renamed *Lotus*. Kanafani's funeral following

his assassination by car bomb in Beirut in the summer of 1972 filled the city's streets in a display of resistance and elegy.

Throughout its long history, *Afro-Asian Writings/Lotus* featured the work of authors writing from or through Arabic, as well as works from formerly and presently Portuguese, French, British, Spanish colonies, and other regions experiencing ongoing imperial warfare, such as Vietnam. In the Arab context, the double issue in which "Resistance Literature in Occupied Palestine" appeared included a short story from Algeria by Mohammed Dib, poetry from Algeria by Malek Haddad, two poems from Palestine by Mahmoud Darweesh, a short story from Egypt by Mohamed A. H. Abdullah, a study from Lebanon by Adonis, , poetry from Iraq by Nzek El-Malaeika, from Sudan by Mohammed A. Mahgoub, poetry from Egypt by Saleh Gawdat and Ahmed A. Moëti Hegazi, a study on Egyptian folklore by Saad El-Khadem, and a study on Afro-Asian sculpture by Edward El-Kharrat (later named editor of *Lotus*), alongside work from throughout Africa and Asia, and reviews of studies on Afro-Asian theater, Sembene Ousmane's new work, Yehia Hakky's study of the Egyptian short story, an new study on Modern African Stories, alongside documents on the Afro-Asian Writers sessions, the Arab Writers' Conference, and the South Vietnam Writers' and Artists' Association.

The art collective Fehras Publishing Practices has an ongoing project that historicizes the presence of Palestinian authors over the years in the pages of the journal, while also hosting reading sessions in which contemporary artists are invited to read from physical copies of the journal, entitled *Hader Halal* and dedicated to the Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

Sources for further reading:

Fāḍil ʻAbbās Hādī. "Qaḍiyat Filasṭīn . . . wa-l-riwāya al-ʻarabiyya al-muʻāṣira." [The question of Palestine . . . and the contemporary Arabic novel] *Al-Hadaf* 156 (1 July 1972).

Barbara Harlow, *Resistance Literature* (Boston: Methuen, 1987).

Elizabeth M. Holt, "Resistance Literature, Occupied Palestine, and Mao," *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Postcolonial Print Cultures* (2023).

_____, "Resistance Literature and Occupied Palestine in Cold War Beirut," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 50 (2021).

Fehras Publishing Practices, *Hader Halal* (ongoing). https://www.fehraspublishingpractices.org/filter/Program/Hader-Halal

Maha Nassar, *Brothers Apart: Palestinian Citizens of Israel and the Arab World* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2017).

Stefan Wild, *Ghassan Kanafani: The Life of a Palestinian* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975).

Source selected and annotated by Elizabeth M. Holt.